

THE HONORABLE RICHARD A. JONES

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

BLACK LIVES MATTER SEATTLE-
KING COUNTY, ABIE EKENEZAR,
SHARON SAKAMOTO, MURACO
KYASHNA-TOCHA, ALEXANDER
WOLDEAB, NATHALIE GRAHAM,
AND ALEXANDRA CHEN,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CITY OF SEATTLE,

Defendant.

No. 2:20-cv-00887-RAJ

DECLARATION OF EMILY GRACE
ROBINSON

I, Emily Grace Robinson, declare and state as follows:

1. The information contained in this declaration is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I am of majority age and competent to testify about the matters set forth herein.

2. I have been to more than 100 protests in Seattle in defense of Black Lives since the murder of George Floyd, including the vigil for Summer Taylor outside of Washington State Patrol and the Labor Day march to the Seattle Police Officers' Guild (SPOG).

3. My son, E.R., age 5, has joined me for roughly half of those protests, including the Labor Day march to SPOG.

1 4. E.R. only protests when he wants to, and only during the day (never at night).
2 Most of the protests he has attended were organized or promoted by the Every Day March
3 (EDM), a group that vocally advocates a nonviolent approach to protest. EDM has been very
4 supportive of me and E.R. and adapted their messages to make them more kid-friendly. At many
5 of the protests E.R. has attended, there isn't any police presence at all.

6 5. Although police violence has broken out at other protests E.R. and I have been at,
7 I have always been able to leave with him at the first signs of escalation.

8 **6. But at the Labor Day SPOG protest, police attacked us with chemical**
9 **weapons without warning, before I could remove E.R. to safety. E.R. got OC spray in his**
10 **eyes from the immediate and indiscriminate police use of this weapon.**

11 7. I wanted to participate in the Labor Day event to honor the sacrifices of the labor
12 activists who endured police violence fighting for the right to collectively bargain, and to protest
13 violence against Black people by the officers represented by the police union.

14 8. The Labor Day event was supposed to have been a joyous occasion. There were
15 people of all ages in attendance. I saw two children other than E.R. in the crowd, and heard there
16 were other children present. My friend brought her parents, who are in their 70s.

17 9. Before the protest began, organizers made clear that no one should engage in any
18 kind of property damage or violence or give the police any reason to attack us. We picked up
19 trash as the group made our way to SPOG from the meeting point near the International
20 District/Chinatown light rail station. When we made it to SPOG, E.R. and I stopped in front of
21 the SPOG building towards the right side. Organizers handed out chalk to draw messages in the
22 street.

23 10. E.R. crouched in the street, writing "No more youth jail" in chalk. His favorite
24 chant at protests is "What's outrageous? Kids in cages." After carefully printing each letter in the
25 words "no more," he took a break to blow bubbles.
26

1 11. **E.R. was blowing bubbles when I saw the first puff of spicy gas go up into the**
2 **air. The police had shown up out of nowhere, mere minutes after we had arrived, and**
3 **immediately started deploying less-lethal weapons indiscriminately, without provocation.**

4 12. I immediately grabbed E.R. and sprinted to the nearest Car Brigade car, which
5 evacuated us eventually after 30 minutes of circling to find a way to get past the police
6 perimeters created by vehicles and lines of bike cops.

7 13. As we fled, we heard flash bang grenades.

8 14. In the car, E.R. cried and rubbed his eyes in pain from the pepper spray that had
9 gotten in them. He was a ball of emotions: confusion, disappointment, anger, and fear.

10 15. He was disappointed he didn't get to finish his chalk message. And he asked
11 about the loud bangs he had heard. "Were the police shooting at me?" he asked. We assured him
12 they were not, but didn't hide the truth from him. He was extremely angry when he heard about
13 the weapons the police had used against protesters.

14 16. He is also now very afraid of the police. He had understood himself to be
15 protesting to help protect Black children, but before Labor Day, had not felt himself—a white
16 child—to be in danger from police.

17 17. For 24 hours after the protest, E.R. continued to complain that his eyes hurt and
18 his eyes continued to water from the pepper spray. I am in the process of finding E.R. a child
19 trauma therapist who can help him process his many continuing negative feelings stemming from
20 the police violence he experienced and observed on Labor Day.

21
22 Executed this 24th day of September 2020 at SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

23 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States and the State of
24 Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.
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By: _____
EMILY GRACE ROBINSON

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